(b) Patna-Hajipur section of NH-19 is already four lane. Bids were invited on BOT (Toll) mode for 4-laning of Hajipur-Muzaffarpur section of NH-77 , but no bid has been received till last date of submission of bid *i.e.* 20.08.2007.

Construction of roads under NHDP

1937. SHRI MOTIUR RAHMAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance on National Highways Development Programme (NHDP) is poor and the pace of construction of roads is slow;

(b) whether any irregularities/scam in the construction of roads have come to the notice of Government and if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) the quantum of money lost by Government due to slow progress in the construction of roads; and

(d) the measures taken by Government to accelerate the pace of construction of quality roads?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): (a) There has been some delays in the completion of some contracts under National Highways Development Programme (NHDP), due to problems associated with acquisition of land, shifting of utilities, environment and forest clearances, poor performance of some contractors and termination of some contracts etc.

(b) The details of complaints received in Vigilance Division of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) during last five years are as under:-

Year	Complaint received
2003	26
2004	41
2005	37
2006	64
2007	41

Irregularities noticed after completion of investigation are being attended/ rectified or amount recovered from the Contractor/Consultant and also action against the staff is taken up if they are found guilty.

(c) In case the delay is attributable to NHAI, necessary, extension of time is accorded to the contractor as per conditions of contract. However, in case the contractor does not complete the project in the extended period of time (if applicable), the necessary liquidated damages as per the contract provisions is levied on the contractor.

(d) The steps taken by the Government to accelerate the pace of construction of National Highways are given in the Statement.

Statement

The steps taken to accelerate the pace of construction of National Highways

The following steps have been taken to ensure early completion of the projects:-

(a) The Contracts are regularly monitored at various levels such as by Supervision Consultant, Project Directors, Senior officers of NHAI. Progress reviews are also held at the level of Chairman, NHAI, Secretary, Department of Road Transport and Highways and Minister, Shipping, Road Transport and Highways.

(b) State Governments have appointed Senior officers as nodal officers for resolving problems associated with implementation of the NHDP such as land acquisition, removal of utilities, forest/pollution/environment clearances etc. These nodal officers hold periodic meetings to review the projects and take action to resolve the problems.

(c) A Committee of Secretaries has been constituted under Cabinet Secretary to address inter-ministerial and Centre-State issues such as land acquisition, utility shifting, environment approvals, clearance of Road Over Bridges (ROBs).

(d) The procedure of issue of Land Acquisition notifications has now been simplified.

(e) To expedite the construction of ROBs an officer of the Railways has been posted to NHAI to coordinate with Ministry of Railways. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has also been signed with M/s IRCON for construction of some of the ROBs.

(f) Action has been taken against non-performing contractors and they are not allowed to bid for future projects unless they improve the performance in existing contracts.

(g) Steps have been taken to improve cash flow problems of contractors by granting interest bearing discretionary advance at the request of contractor, release of retention money against bank guarantee of equal amount, deferment of recovery of advances (on interest basis) and relaxation in minimum Interim Payments Certificate (IPC) amount.

NS-EW corridor in MP

†1938. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether North-South (NS)-East-West (EW) corridor plan has been finalized;

(b) whether it is a fact that a mere 621 Kms. has been proposed under the National Highway for vast State like Madhya Pradesh;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.